

666

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Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 00] Father, this is your word. Jesus is our Savior, and we are your people. And we ask that you would pour out your Holy Spirit upon your people so that we would not only understand your word, but that it would change how we live.

We ask that you would help us and teach us how to pray. We ask that you would help us and teach us to long to see your face, that you would help us to deny ourselves and pick up our cross and follow Jesus, even when sometimes that's very hard, although carrying a cross is always hard. We give you thanks and praise that your Son said that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would move and work within us so that your Holy Spirit would have a deeper place in our lives.

Father, we ask that you would do a great work, a work of your work in our lives this morning as we gather in the presence of Jesus.

And this we ask in Jesus' name, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, Revelation 13.

[1 : 26] You know, I don't like horror movies in general. In fact, I rarely watch horror movies. I remember even when I was watching *The Sixth Sense*, I watched it because I didn't think it was a horror movie for some reason.

And about a quarter of the way into the movie, I was watching it with a couple of my older kids at the time. I thought, if I was watching this movie by myself, I would turn it off right now and leave. But then I thought, I do not want to appear a wuss in front of my teenage sons. So, I continued to watch the movie. Having said all that, I actually do enjoy the television series, *The Walking Dead*. And when I tell you that I enjoy certain things, this is not a recommendation that you necessarily go out and watch it. Because some of you might not like zombie television series.

But I actually, I am going to talk about zombies later on in the service, for those of you who understand such things. But having said all that, one of the interesting things about horror movies, etc., and in our culture, is that while there's a whole range of things in our culture, that there's many, many people in our culture who are fairly illiterate in terms of the Bible.

[2 : 34] And that's, you know, fair enough. They haven't been raised as Christians. Why would they know what Christianity is? But in fact, the idea of the beast and the number 666, there are many, many, many people who would have understood that.

If you were to go by, probably just stand at the corner of King Edward and Rideau, and ask people, are you familiar with the idea of 666 and the beast and the number of the beast? Like, I wouldn't be surprised if 80, 90, 95% of the people said they had heard of such things.

So it's actually sort of interesting that today we get to look at the original source of these ideas. And so it would be a great help to me if you actually, yeah, let's turn in the Bible, and let's look at this great source of these very, very familiar ideas.

And it's a book of Revelation. It's the last book in the Bible. And it's Revelation chapter 13. And actually, we're going to start reading, like, the very last sentence of the chapter before this.

And the chapter before, it talks about the dragon. And the dragon is sort of an image of the devil. And here's how the text begins.

[3 : 45] And it goes like this. Revelation, the very last bit of chapter 12, and then into the chapter 13. And the dragon stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising out of the sea.

And by the way, the implication of the text is that the dragon is calling the beast out of the sea. In the original language, that's the implication. So the dragon stands on the sand of the sea looking out.

And then John, who's having this vision, he sees a beast rising out of the sea with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and a name of blasphemy on its heads. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard. Its feet were like a bear's. And its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it, the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound. In the original language, it means a death wound. But its death wound was healed.

[4 : 55] And the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. And they worshipped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast.

And they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like the beast and who can fight against it? Now, I'm going to say some shocking things about this text.

But I want to make sure you understand what I'm saying. And so I'm going to repeat, and Andrew's going to put it on the screen. I'm going to repeat some things that I said last week, just to sort of set the stage for what I'm saying.

And by the way, today, for all of the things that are on the screen, I think by Monday or Tuesday, if you're interested, you can go on our webpage and you can write them down. This first part, it'll be far too quick for you to write down.

But here's the first thing. Before I say all of the other things about the text, the shocking thing about the text, to understand the shocking claim of the text, you have to understand this. The Bible teaches that the devil is real.

[5 : 57] He is our enemy. He is alive. He is active. He is doomed. And in the face of his opposition, we, that means followers of the Lamb, are to testify with our lips and with our lives of our Savior, Jesus Christ crucified.

That's what we have to understand, that the Bible is saying that the devil is real, just as real as I am or you are. And to sort of emphasize this, this is also what I said last week, which we need to understand if we're to hear Revelation 13, as it's meant to be heard.

After you hear it, you might say this is all rubbish or whatever, but at least you need to hear what it's saying, what the Bible is claiming to say. The devil is real. He is not a metaphor, an analogy, a symbol, a process, a myth, a mere storybook character, or a social construct.

He is not a primitive way to talk of mental illness or evil. He is not a tool of politicians to label others or enemies, although some politicians try to make it out as if he's a tool, but he is not a tool.

He is not a creation of politicians or cultural leaders to label others. The devil is not misunderstood.

He is not a hero. He is not a rebel.

[7 : 25] He is not a freedom fighter. He is not hip. He is not cool. He is not enlightened. He is not yin or yang to God. He is not the antithesis leading to a new synthesis.

He is not energy, friend, ally, means, tool, or joke. In ourselves, he is more powerful than we are.

The devil is real. He is our enemy. He is alive. He is active. He is doomed. And in the face of his opposition, we are to testify with our lips and with our lives of our Savior, Jesus Christ, crucified.

As I said last week, if the devil does not exist, if the devil, in fact, is merely a metaphor or analogy or a symbol or a social construct or something like that, then it's a complete and utter waste of time to read the book of Revelation.

I'd say it's probably a waste of time to read the Bible. And it's just a waste of time to even talk about it. But if the devil does exist, then today's teaching, just like last week's, is immensely practical.

[8 : 34] So here's the thing. Remember I said that the text has, the book of Revelation is a wonderful book for those of us who have very, very great visual, our minds just love images.

And so it presents this very, very powerful image of the devil like a dragon, a huge dragon. Think of smog, only with many heads. And even far more horrible.

And he stands on the sand of the sea, looking out to the sea. And by, he believes his power, he causes a beast to arise out of the sea.

And if you'll notice very early on, it says that he has, was like a leopard, verse two, its feet were like a bear's and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority to the beast.

And that imagery comes from the book of Daniel. And in the book of Daniel, it's very clear that these are a succession of empires. empires. So from this and from the rest of the chapter, it's very, very clear that the beast is, and here's where people differ, whether it's an individual, but if it's an individual or not, that the thing is, it's the government and it's the state.

[9 : 46] It's a type of, it's an empire. It's not only a government, a state, it's the judiciary, it's the military, it's the police. It's the state.

It is a government. It is a person, the government. It's that which exercises political and cultural authority over nations. That's the claim of the text. Here's the shocking point.

Andrew, if you could put that up, that would be great. The devil can have a significant impact on any institution, even the state and the government.

That's what Revelation chapter 13 is saying, that the devil can have a significant impact on any institution, even the state and the government.

See, I needed to say that earlier part because it's very common maybe in certain types of political discussion or cultural discussion about saying something's demonic and what we mean when we say demonic in our culture just means, like rather than saying it's bad, we want to say it's really, really, really, really, really, really, really bad so we say it's demonic.

[10 : 54] But the Bible here is making a very, very different claim. Not that it's not bad, it is bad, but that actually the devil, that there is, it is possible for the devil, not just, last week we talked about primarily the one major way that most people experience the devil's sort of hand or touch in their lives.

And if you, you can listen to last week's sermon online and I was talking about a great sense of condemnation and accusation that can completely and utterly, it can have a powerful, powerful role in our lives, a sense of condemnation and accusation.

And I also warned of the fact that there could be a more direct contact with Satan and I warned us against Ouija boards and other things. But just as in our culture we tend to think of religion and spirituality as being something inherently private and sort of inside of us and often a cross between a hobby and an emotion, and so it is even maybe when we speak of the devil or demons, it's easy for us to think of it as being merely personal.

But the Bible here in chapter 12 and chapter 13 of Revelation is saying that not only is the devil one who we can experience in our lives through accusation and condemnation and maybe we will have a more direct contact with him, the devil also can affect and impact institutions.

Institutions. Even the government and even the state. You know, as I was working on the sermon this week, I've been reading, I read like several books at the same time, you know, bits and pieces of books and I was reading a little bit about Corrie Ten Boom.

[12 : 45] How many people here remember who Corrie Ten Boom is or who heard of Corrie Ten Boom? A fair amount of you. Okay. On Friday, it was the 70th anniversary of her capture by the Nazis.

I just happened to, I was just reading it and it mentioned, I was reading a book and it mentioned on February 28, 1944, that was the day that Corrie Ten Boom was woken from sleep by a sound of loud knocking on their door and it was the Gestapo.

Corrie Ten Boom at the time was 54. Her sister was five years older than her. They were both unmarried. They lived with their father who was in his 80s. I think he was 83 and they had played a central role in hiding Jewish people from the Nazis and as being part of the Dutch resistance and that was the day that they, their betrayers, betrayed them and she, of course, eventually went to a concentration camp.

Her and her sister and her dad and her sister and her father would die in the concentration camps and Corrie would miraculously survive and be delivered and go on to have a speaking ministry and for Christians who were caught under Nazism, it was very easy for them to wonder if in fact there was not just something evil about Nazism but in fact whether there was something devilish and I mean in terms of a devil being involved in it and we feel very uncomfortable about such language living in Canada and I'm going to talk a little bit about that in a moment but for some Christians who live in some parts of the world today and for Christians throughout history there would be times in certain cultures and certain times when it would be easy for us to actually take a text like this and realize that there is probably a great truth in it that we cannot limit the devil's work purely to people but also to institutions even the government even the state and here's the thing actually you know what

I'm going to have a little bit of a okay I know there's always in any room this side there's a few grammar geeks we're going to have a grammar geek moment okay so for you grammar geeks and the rest of you can listen in you want to just sort of go ahead to verse 7 and 8 and look at verse 7 and 8 there's a grammar geek moment coming here in a second also it was allowed that's the beast

to make war on the saints and to conquer them and authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation and all who dwell on earth will worship it everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the lamb who was slain and notice that verse 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it in the original language all the way through chapter 13 in fact all the way up to this point just a little bit past it the verb tenses are a particular tense which means that everything that's being described can be described as in some way being true in the future and in the past and in the present and in the rest of chapter 13 when it's talking about the second beast once again the verb tenses are all a type of a verb tense that allows us to understand it on one level talking about the future the past and the present but in the midst of a whole range of verb tenses like that there's only one future tense in the entire text and that is in verse 8 all who dwell on earth this is in the original language will worship it in other words the rest of the text is describing something that on one level there's a certain degree to which it can be true even today but the text reminds us that there will be a complete fulfillment of this text at some day in the future that at some day in the future there will be a beast a political reality that will in fact have a type of worldwide reach that will affect everybody that at that time there will in a sense be those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life which I'll talk about in a moment or those who quite literally quite literally are involved in the worship of this beast but that is pointing to a future time and all the rest of the way through the text it's talking about things which can be approximated now but are not the fullness that will come see one of the things that you have to understand about the Book of Revelation is this that and if you don't get it if I haven't been clear about it other weeks [17:34] I apologize is the Bible very clearly teaches that Jesus will return again that God will bring history to a close and it's because the very one who has created all things the very one who sustains all things the very one the Lamb who died to redeem those who turned to Him in repentance and faith that that is the very same person who will bring all things to a close that's the ground for hope that's the ground for repentance that's the ground for being able to stand in the face of the dragon and stand in the face of the beast and stand in the face of evil in our culture wherever we find it and it's all because of the fact that the Lamb who was slain who redeems all who put their faith and trust in Him is the same one who will someday return whether it's in a week's time whether it's in seven years time seven years time seven hundred years time we do not know when it is but at some point in time most of the thing all of the things that we've been talking about in the book of Revelation there will be a sense where not a sense it will be it will be it will be in its fullness and those

Lord have mercy who are alive at that time will see and understand it in its fullness and what the text is doing is it's trying to give us a language and a grammar and a set of images to understand our own culture but also if we happen to be that generation that are still alive when that final time comes that we will have a set of images and language and ideas to help us to understand what in fact it is that is going on now does this mean here by the way this text George you're saying that the dragon the devil can have a profound impact on institutions human institutions even the state does that mean George that all the people that we know that work for the military should quit does that mean that all of those who work in the police and the judiciary should quit does that mean those who work on Parliament Hill should quit no here's the thing

Andrew if you could put this up here's a prayer for us to pray and it's sort of a very important text to understand it's a prayer for us to pray in a sense an application a take home for us to understand what the implication of this text is for us in terms of how we live and here's how I put it dear God please help me to seek the true good of this city please help me to seek your definition of the city's good not the city's own definition of its good dear God please help me to seek the true good of this city please help me to seek your definition of the city's good not the city's own definition of its good one of the lessons of the book of Revelation and I mentioned it when I was describing that point that I used last week is that the devil is real he is our enemy he is alive he is active he is doomed and in the face of his opposition in the face of his opposition we are to bear witness with our lives and with our lips of Jesus

Christ crucified and the book of Revelation isn't telling us that because these things are happening we should live in fear it doesn't tell us these things so we will brood or be consumed or obsessed with them it doesn't tell us these things so that we will live in holy ghettos or enclaves we have a fundamental we have a fundamental vocation that comes from God to bear witness to Jesus and we have a fundamental vocation that comes from God not only to bear witness to Jesus but to seek

the good of the city and now I don't know what advice I would give if we were maybe in that very final time I mean this text would inform it but here's the primary thing is that when we seek the good of our city what we do not seek is the city's own definition of the good we seek Jesus' definition of the good I don't know how many of you are familiar with Dietrich Bonhoeffer I've been reading some things about him this past week as well and Dietrich Bonhoeffer by personal order of Hitler was executed just a very very short while before Hitler himself took his own life Dietrich Bonhoeffer leader of the Confessing Church and maybe not many of you know this but the thing about Bonhoeffer is that early on he was one of the very very first people in Germany to speak out about the evils of Nazism and to warn about the evils of Nazism and early on in the 30s he actually tried to create an underground seminary because he believed that increasingly the seminaries and the churches they were because they wanted to curry favor and maintain their position they were becoming Nazi in their theology and so he created an underground seminary which was eventually overcome and closed by the Gestapo but how he ended up hiding and working against the Hitler for many many years is he joined military intelligence because for many years under Hitler the main source of opposition within Germany was devout Christians within military intelligence and one of the ways that they sought the true good of their country was to document the evils that the Nazis were performing was to communicate the evils of the death camps to the wider world and to seek to overthrow

[23 : 20] Hitler that is how they sought the good of their country they did not allow Hitler to define the good of Germany they went to God's word written they went to the Lamb to understand God's word written and so it is I apologize for a second if I I'm just going to say this anyway our city might think that more abortion is good our city might think that euthanasia is good and we are to pray for the good of our city and seek the good of our city but our city is wrong about that what is good for the city is that the strong care for the weak what is good for the city is that the strong and the healthy care for the defenseless what is good for the city is that we rescue those who are poor and lonely and deprived and depressed have no power and that we seek to rescue them to restore them to protect them and so there might be many ways that we can work in harmony with our city we can feed the poor we can give to orphans around the world and we can agree with them but where the city is wrong we still seek the true good of this city and it's the lamb who determines the true good not the city and so it is that the devil can have a significant impact on any institution even the state and the government and we are to pray that in any situation amid the example I gave of

Bonhoeffer many of the people it was with the so called Valkyrie plot which they put a bomb in a bunker that Hitler was at and a leg of a table amongst other things protected Hitler and if you've seen the Tom Cruise movie it ignores the Christian side but many of the Bonhoeffer's friends and family members very devout Christians that plot ended up being the death of them and but they they sought to serve their city by the by the lamb's definition of the city's good and that is always our vocation as followers of Jesus now some of you might say George that's I have to get my mind around the fact that the devil could actually have an impact on cultural institutions and I'm not quite sure what to make about it

I can see that you believe it and I accept that the Bible teaches it and it's just something I have to sort of think through but George I'm a little bit confused by something that you haven't gotten to in the text and maybe you won't because I know you have a time limit in terms of what you speak and some of you might be saying George I don't quite understand really how Christians think of the difference between the beast and Jesus it's an honest question I mean George don't you guys believe that like miracles are good but the beast remember when Ken was reading a few moments ago that the second beast that performs miracles and George don't you like why is it that you want to follow Jesus rather than this beast I mean you're saying that the beast is evil but why are you wanting to follow Jesus rather than the beast doesn't the beast die and come to life and isn't George the whole reason that you follow Jesus isn't a very key part of the reason that you follow Jesus is that Jesus died and come to life so I'm a little bit confused about why you think there's such a big difference here like

George isn't it maybe a text about how like any type of thing can sort of be demonic even following Jesus can be a little bit demonic it's a very good series of questions let's just look again at the text look again look at the text here is playing around with a little bit it's a bit starker but its head had a mortal wound a death wound but its death wound was healed and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast and they worshipped the dragon for he had given his authority to the beast and

they worshipped the beast saying who is like the beast and who can fight against it and the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words just sort of pause here for a second as we're reading you know one of the really interesting things is if you ever watch a movie where a TV show and somebody says that's blasphemy don't you automatically think that that's a person who's not a good person isn't it sort of very interesting in our culture we've lost the sense of blasphemy that even to mention it is something that culturally puts us as if we're a bit clueless just an idea and it was allowed to exercise authority for 42 months it opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God blaspheming his name and his dwelling that is those who dwell in heaven also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them this is the death knell of prosperity gospel and authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation and all who dwell on the earth will worship it everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world and the book of life of the lamb who was slain the lamb's book of life talk about that in a moment if anyone has an ear let him hear if anyone is to be taken captive to captivity he goes if anyone is to be slain with the sword with the sword he must be slain here's a call for the endurance and faith of the saints you see that's the key to that last prayer point is that the whole point of making clear that the devil can have an impact on culture and institutions is to call us to faithful endurance and enduring faithfulness where we are it's a very very center of the text [30 : 05] I'm going to return to it at the end but continue on about the miracle stuff look at verse 11 then I saw another beast rising out of the earth it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon I'm not going to talk about it very much this is a very very powerful image it's a image which God desires to have as part of our mental furniture to help us understand what's going on that there can be a beast a demonic beast that that would had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon very powerful image to guide our prayers and discernment verse 12 it exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast whose death wound was healed the third time it says it yet the second beast performs great signs it's the word for miracles even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of the people and by the miracles or the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on the earth telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded fourth time it says that by the sword and yet lived and it was allowed to give breath to the image that's an idol of the beast so that the image the idol of the beast might even speak might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast the idol of the beast to be slain now so what's what's going on here's the point and if you could put it up on the screen

Jesus truly died on the cross and truly defeated evil and death and every hostile spiritual power he did not die only to die again he did not die to live a living death some of you have heard this illustration before it's one of my favorite illustrations about what one of the things which is involved in salvation and that's the story a true story happened quite a few years ago I think I had four or five kids at the time four kids I think they're all very young and I was up in Eganville where I was the pastor and my wife was down in Ottawa visiting her mother in the glebe and Louise woke up in the middle of the night three or four o'clock in the morning with a sense that something was wrong and her mother lived in a big old three story glebe house and Louise had a sense that something was wrong and she went to the door and she opened the door and the hallway was filled with smoke and in fact the entire ground floor of the house was completely consumed in fire and I was up in Eganville I didn't know anything about this Louise looked around they couldn't get out of one window but there was another window she went and woke up her mother she gathered our very very young children at the time and she was able to open the window she's young and healthy and she's able to outside of the window sort of a couple of feet to the right there's a couple of feet down there's a slanting roof of a shed and she figures that she can get from the window to the shed and from that position with some effort she would be able to help the children get the children and bring the children to the top of the shed and then help her mother who was older over to the shed as well and so she got herself to safety and from that position of safety she reaches across the gap to the place for which the flames are coming and is able to bring each of the children over to the shed down to the ground and all of them in the house

Louise is here at church today so she's obviously still alive so it worked out and I'm very very thankful for it that's a very very good illustration of one of the great truths of the gospel in the gospel we believe that Jesus truly died that he truly died upon the cross that he truly died upon the cross and he tasted everything there is to taste of death without anything left over whatever death is

Jesus tasted it and on the third day he emerged on the far side of death having completely and utterly defeated death and one of the things that happens on the cross is that Jesus is able to reach across that vast divide of death and reach his hands out and those of us who cannot escape death cannot escape death we put our hands out and Jesus his hands reach farther to us and if we put our hands out his strong hands does what we cannot do by ourselves or in and of ourselves and takes us through death to the other side where he is completely and utterly defeated death and that is what

Jesus is doing for ordinary people like you and me that song that we sang the last song that we sang for thieves for the poor for the powerless for the rich for the powerful for every human being death defeats us all and the Christian claim is that Jesus defeats death on our behalf and if we humbly put our faith and trust in him he will take us to the far side of death where death has no longer any hold on us that's what my wife did to the children and to her mother and that's to see why we worship Jesus and not Lazarus Lazarus was dead for four days longer than Jesus but Jesus Lazarus doesn't cause himself to come back to life Jesus calls Lazarus back to life but Lazarus emerges into death and returns to this side of death death he will still have to die remember in the point I think it's still up on the screen what am I saying that the Bible teaches that Jesus truly died on the cross and truly defeated evil and death and every hostile spiritual power he did not die only to die again he is not

[36 : 17] Lazarus that's why we don't worship Lazarus we worship Jesus that's why we don't trust Lazarus we trust Jesus that's why we don't trust the widow of name's son we trust Jesus but what about the beast well here's where the analogy of Louise doesn't doesn't work doesn't work because you see what happens is that we Christians understand that what Jesus does on the cross is deals with that which causes death and all of our bondage and alienation from God that on the cross remember last week I said there were six words for the rest of our life in my place condemned he stood in my place condemned he stood after the sermon last week I looked it up it's from a title of a book by

Jim Packer and Mark Deaver and they get the word from an old hymn it's a line in an old hymn in my place condemned he stood so on the cross Jesus by his offering of himself taking into himself my condemnation my doom he deals with evil he deals with my separation and alienation from God and he deals with all accusations or condemnation that could come against me or any of you because of my sin and my rebellion against God and then when he rises from the dead it's a true act of victory he has defeated sin and death and all hostile spiritual powers tasted all there is to taste of death all there is to taste of evil all there is to taste of condemnation and he emerges on the far side completely and utterly triumphant but here the beast is a living death he is alive a type of life but it is not a life that is dealt with hostile spiritual powers it is not a new life that is dealt with evil it is a life deepening in evil deepening in accusation and condemnation deepening in rebellion against God it is closer to what we understand in popular parlance of dying to become a zombie than dying for new life it is a death and a life that deepens us in death and deepens us under the control of hostile spiritual powers the same dragon that sought to devour the child is the guiding principle of the new life

Jesus defeats the beast all the way through the language the language of the whole text is one of having Jesus defeating the beast defeating the demon but the death and resurrection of Jesus is radically radically different than what's being discussed here even miracles the Christian arguments about miracles are a defeat it's to argue against naturalism it's a philosophical term it's an argument against naturalism and atheism but it's not a claim that all Christians don't claim that only God performs miracles that all miracles point to God that's not a Christian claim Christians accept the fact that demons can do things which can't be accounted for purely by natural means the point isn't whether or not something happens according to natural means or not the point is does it point us to the lamb or does it point us to the dragon does it point us and reconcile us to God or does it deepen us in our rebellion against God does it bring us to life or does it bring us to death that's the point of the miracles it's why they have to be discerned and so the takeaway for us the take home for us is that if Jesus truly died on the cross and truly defeated evil and death in every hostile spiritual power he did not die only to die again he did not die to live a living death the implication for us is this dear God

I thank you that Jesus is the lamb who was slain I thank you that because of his sacrificial death and mighty resurrection I by repentance and faith in him have my name forever written in his book

of life dear God I thank you that Jesus is the lamb who was slain I thank you that because of his sacrificial death and mighty resurrection I by repentance and faith in him have my name forever written in his book of life you see it's the wonderful thing you go back to that image in chapter 8 verse 8 and all who dwell on the earth will worship at everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the lamb who was slain you see when I put my faith and trust in Jesus God writes my name in a book I don't write my name in that book it's a book of those who belong to Jesus who have been reconciled to God by Jesus God not weighing our merits but pardoning our offenses not because we are more powerful and more wonderful and more insightful it's because Jesus has conquered death and he's conquered sin and he's conquered hostile spiritual powers and he does it for you and he does it for me and he reaches his hands across and all who humbly reach their hands can only reach a tiny distance his hand is strong and his arm is long and he reaches down my grip is weak his grip will not fail and when I reach out to him he will grab my wrist crossing that infinite distance from heaven to earth and take me as his own and no work of the beast can ever overcome that is the Christian confidence in the face of the beast one I see my time is up just one thing ask your patience some of you might say George I have an easy time believing in demons

[42 : 47] I have a hard time believing that I could worship the beast like what do you think I am George you think I'm like a tweeny girl going kooky over you know Justin Bieber or whoever the latest little tweeny heartthrob is do you think I'm like one of those political type of geeks who get all excited at a convention over something that Kathleen Wynne says or Hudak says or Merwa says or Harper or Trudeau or Moclair do you think I'm like one of those like really odd people who get all excited at a convention over something I have a hard time believing that I would ever worship anything I have an easier time believing in demons than I would worship the beast just here in closing a very very important thing the Bible teaches Andrew if you could put it up is to be human is to worship the Bible teaches is that to be human is to worship therefore the question I daily need to face is who or what am I worshiping who or what am I worshiping and the heart of worship is an ecstasy the heart of worship is what do I serve what do

I love what do I obey what do I trust what do I hope in like as you go through your day what are you serving what are you loving what are you hoping what are you serving loving obeying hoping trusting what do you put your trust in your hope in what God or gods are organizing your day in terms of the things that you serve love obey trust and hope in and the Bible teaches that human beings are always serving something always loving something always obeying something always trusting something always hoping in something and unless the supreme thing that we serve and love and obey and trust and hope in is God himself then all these other lesser things become gods to us and we might not feel ecstatic about it I mean maybe we will maybe if we're worshipping money and we win a hundred thousand dollars we will get ecstatic about it and we'll look just like a tweeny girl worshipping the latest heartthrob maybe it wouldn't even be a hundred thousand dollars maybe it's finding a twenty dollar bill in your pocket

I don't know maybe it has to be more but it's not all about ecstasy it's about serving loving obeying trusting and hoping in something and here's the sort of the takeaway from the text for us it's this dear God please help me to recognize who or what I serve love obey trust and hope in if it is not you alone then help me to repent and learn to worship you alone for your glory dear God please help me to recognize who or what I serve love obey and trust and hope in if it is not you alone then help me to repent and learn to worship you alone for your glory please stand remember the very center of the text is verse 10 here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints we enter the Jesus way one by one but we walk the Jesus way with Jesus and others that's what the Christian life is that we enter the

Jesus way by putting our faith and trust in him we acknowledge that we have a hard time we serve love obey trust hope in all sorts of things and we have a hard time doing it in our own effort our own flesh doing that with God we need to be reconciled to God by what Jesus does upon the cross and when we put our faith and hope and trust in him we enter the Jesus way just one person at a time my parents can't do it for me my kids can't do it for me I have to do it myself but I walk the Jesus way you walk the Jesus way with Jesus and others and the book of Revelation is trying to tell us that his way may be very hard at times it's very hard probably to be a follower of Jesus in Iran today or Saudi Arabia today so there's places in the world where it'll but it is never impossible or doomed because the primary work is done by Jesus for us and the

Bible invites us to respond to the gospel and as we respond to the gospel the story of Jesus to pray that we'll be gripped by the gospel in such a way that our lives will be formed to bring God glory let's bow our heads in prayer father i give you thanks and praise that you did not weigh our merits but pardoned our offenses we give you thanks and praise that your son did not die upon the cross only to come back to life and have to die again we give you thanks and praise that when he died upon the cross he defeated sin and defeated death and defeated all hostile spiritual powers so that when we come to him in repentance and faith he gives us true life eternal life everlasting life our names are written in the lamb's book of life we give you thanks and praise that he does not have us enter more deeply into death or evil a living death that he offers us life eternal life we give you thanks and praise father for the great victory of

[48 : 26] Jesus may your Holy Spirit so move and work within our lives that we are gripped by the gospel so gripped by the gospel day by day that we bring you glory with our lives and all this we ask in the name of Jesus your son and our savior amen to what serve and give fucking love one of you and counseling everybody never have way an unhappy here now you know